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Buoyage System

The buoyage system in the waters of Taiwan is not known to conform to any particular system.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the Taiwan dollar, consisting of 100 cents.

General

Taiwan (Republic of China) is located in the E part of Asia bordering the East China Sea, Philippine Sea, South China Sea, and Taiwan Strait, N of the Philippines, off the SE coast of China. It occupies the island of Taiwan and the adjoining islands of P'eng-hu Lieh-tao.

It also includes a number of small islands of which Chin-men Tao is the largest and best known. Taiwan is separated from the mainland by the Taiwan Strait.

The climate is subtropical in the N and tropical in the S. The typhoon season extends from July to September.

The terrain in the E part of the country is mostly rugged mountains. The W consists of flat to gently rolling plains.

On the E coast the mountains reach the very edge of the sea making good harbors nonexistent.

Many rivers originate in the mountains but their courses are short and rapid.

The only river of importance to navigation is the lower part of the Tan-shui Ho.

Government

Taiwan is a multiparty democratic form of government. The President, who is the head of state, and the Vice President were elected by popular vote in 1996.

The capital is Taipei.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

January 1 and 2, New Year's Days; February 12, Chinese Lunar New Year's Eve; February 13 to 14, Chinese Lunar New Year's Days; March 29, Youth Day; April 5, Ancestors Day; May 1, Labor Day; June 15, Dragon Boat Festival; September 21, Mid-Autumn Festival; September 28, Teacher's Day; October 10, Anniversary of the Recovery of Taiwan; October 31, President Chiang's Birthday; November 12, Dr. Sun-Yat-Sens' Birthday; December 25, Constitution Day.

Industries

The main industries are based on electronic, textiles, chemicals, clothing, food processing, plywood, sugar milling, cement, shipbuilding, and petroleum refining.

Major exports are sugar, textiles, manufactured goods, metals, lumber and plywood.

Imports are machinery and manufactured goods, petroleum, chemical fertilizer, cotton, food grains, vehicles, and pharmaceuticals.

Languages

The official language of Taiwan is Mandarin Chinese. Other languages spoken are Taiwanese, a form of southern Chinese dialects, Japanese, and some English.

Pilotage

Pilotage is compulsory for all vessels, including warships, at all ports in Taiwan. Vessels calling at Taiwan ports should inform harbor authorities and agents 24 hours before arrival, by message via Keelung or Kaohsiung, giving the name of the ship, nationality, ETA, draft, and description of cargo and passengers. Pilots are available upon request to the harbormaster.

Regulations

Vessels in distress seeking refuge in the ports of Taiwan are subject to several regulations.

Any foreign vessel which must enter a port in Taiwan due to a disaster, or for the purpose of refuge must first inform the Harbor Office, according to the formal procedure, for permission to enter the outer harbor and anchor at a designated spot pending inspection, if such vessel is still able to sail and communicate.

Upon receipt of a request from the above foreign vessel, either in distress or permission to enter for refuge, the Harbor Office will reply to the vessel granting permission and at the same time notify the Joint Inspection Office (Immigration Office), Customs Office, and Quarantine Office to dispatch officers to inspect the vessel.

If the vessel in distress is unable to sail or communicate, or communications break down after the distress signal is sent, the Harbor Office should upon receipt of the signal, take immediate steps to effect the vessel's rescue, enlisting the assistance of the Navy if necessary, and at the same time inform the authorities concerned to prepare for the usual procedure.

Vessels in distress or seeking refuge shall not be permitted to enter if found, after inspection, to be in any of the following conditions:

1. Loaded with dangerous cargo.
2. Affected by an epidemic of acute contagious diseases.
3. Showing no evidence of distress nor any need for refuge and warranting no necessity of entry.

Regarding conditions (1) and (2), if the vessel is in great and urgent distress, immediate steps should be taken to rescue the passenger and crew members but the vessel shall not be permitted to enter.

Harbor Management Regulations

Extracts from the Taiwan Provincial Government Regulations are listed below:

Article 1.

The Taiwan Provincial Government, hereinafter called this government, has enacted these regulations for the purpose of managing port administrations, calling or leaving vessels, operations on the land or in the water and port facilities as well as maintaining the order and safety in the harbor area.

Article 2.

In accordance with Article 1 of the Commercial Harbor Statute Promulgated by the Central Government, the commercial harbors in Taiwan designated by the Executive Yuan are as follows:

1. Keelung Harbor (including Suao Harbor).
2. Kaohsiung Harbor.
3. Hualian Harbor.

Article 3.

The harbor bureaus under Provincial Communications Department are the supervisory authorities of all commercial harbors.

Article 4.

The vessel, harbor area, and dangerous article called in these regulations are defined, as follows:

1. Vessel—All types of vessels which are navigable in or under the water.
2. Harbor area—Both land and water area within the harbor limit. The area will be surveyed and delimited by this government and further designated by the Ministry of Communications in accordance with Article 2 of the Commercial Harbor Statute.
3. Dangerous article—Denoting explosives, gases compressed into a liquid or melted form, combustible liquid or solid, oxidizers, poisonous or contagious materials, radioactive materials, corrosive materials, and others. The breakdown of dangerous articles will be designated by the Ministry of Communications.

Article 5.

The boundary lines for jurisdictions of Keelung, Kaohsiung and Hualian Harbor Bureau are indicated below:

1. On the W coast, the mouth of Cho Shui River at 23°50'N is the divider, N of which Keelung Harbor Bureau has jurisdiction; S of which (including P'eng-hu island groups) Kaohsiung Harbor Bureau has jurisdiction.
2. On the E coast, the mouth of Ho Ping River at 24°18'40"N is the divider, N of which Keelung has jurisdiction; S of which (including Lu Island and Orchid Island) Hualian Harbor Bureau has jurisdiction.
3. On the S coast drawing a vertical line extending from N to S at O-Luan-Pi at 21°54'15"N, 120°50'45"E, E of which Hualian Harbor Bureau has jurisdiction; W of which Kaohsiung Harbor Bureau has jurisdiction.

Article 6.

A 24-hour advance notice should be given to the harbor bureau by the calling vessel by means of radio or by the

shipping company or agent concerning the vessel's scheduled arrival time, draught, kinds of cargo and passengers if any.

The shipping company or agent has to clear the entry or clearance procedures for the vessel calling or leaving the harbor with the government agencies concerned. The difference between the scheduled and actual arrival time must not exceed 12 hours; however, the Harbor Controlling Regulations in Taiwan will apply to the vessel on emergency leave or entry.

Fishing boats do not have to report the scheduled arrival time to the harbor bureau if they do not use the berths outside the designated berthing area.

Article 7.

Calling vessels must anchor at the anchorage to wait for quarantine and inspections regardless of arrival in the daytime or at night. Their anchoring location shall not interfere with the public fairway.

When the signal is given as to the berth and permission, the ship shall then hoist the same signal in response to the notification.

Article 8.

Vessels entering or leaving the harbor shall hoist the Chinese National flag, country-registered national flag, ship's flag, and the berthing signal flag.

Article 9.

In case a vessel comes into a harbor to avoid danger or goes out and comes back within 12 hours for some reason, a written report is required instead of an entry report if approved to enter by the harbor bureau.

Article 10.

While in the harbor, vessels must not proceed abreast or overtake.

They shall observe the International Rules of the Road and also must slow down as much as possible and sometimes must go very slowly when other vessels are used for diving, surveying, dredging, repairing floating marks, or something else in the harbor.

Article 11.

The leaving vessel, after being inspected, shall not dock at a wharf again or stay in the harbor.

No crew members of the vessel, which has been permitted to enter and dock due to a disaster or for refuge purpose, may go ashore unless under special circumstances and with the authorization of the Immigration Office. The radio station on board the vessel shall be sealed and suspended from operation immediately upon entry into port of the vessel.

Vessels permitted to enter the port, due to a disaster or for the purpose of taking refuge, should, in accordance with the regular procedures, apply to the Harbor Office for permission to leave the port as soon as the disaster is over. When permission is granted, the vessel may leave the harbor under the supervision of a representative of the Immigration Office who will break the seal suspending the operation of the vessel's radio station.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is HOTEL (-8).

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. maintains no diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

Unofficial commercial and other relations with Taiwan are maintained through a private organization, the American Institute in Taiwan, and has offices in Taipei and Kaohsiung.